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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

TITLE:

**Cultures in Conflict:**

**An Assessment of Frontier Diplomacy during the French and Indian War**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

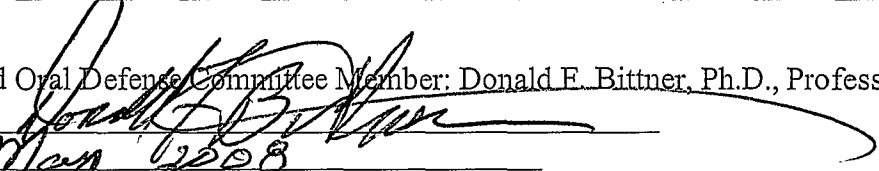
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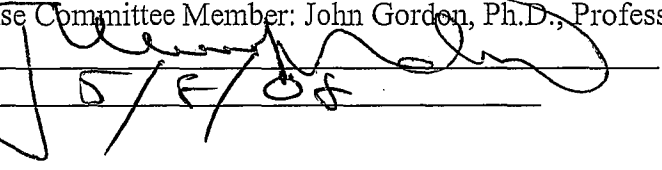
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### *Executive Summary*

Title: Cultures in Conflict: An Assessment of Frontier Diplomacy during the French and Indian War

Author: Major Kevin L. Moody, United States Marine Corps

Thesis: Cultural clashes and differing strategic objectives among Amerindians and the European powers led to parallel warfare during the French and Indian War.

Discussion: During the fourth and final struggle for colonial dominance in North America, the French, English, and Iroquois Confederacy weaved a delicate balance of diplomacy and combined warfare to advance their interests. Native Americans experienced dramatic social and cultural changes as a result of two and a half centuries of exchange and interaction with Europeans. Disease, advanced weapons, and trade dependency contributed to increasing levels of inter-native violence. Amerindian objectives in warfare included captive taking to replenish tribal losses, plunder to advance trade, prestige for tribal advancement, revenge, and territorial expansion.

Due to their small colonial population, New France required close diplomatic ties with their Amerindian neighbors. Colonists relied on natives for protection, food, and trade. Consequently, the French and their Amerindian neighbors crafted a mutual system of cultural interaction that facilitated trade, diplomacy, and peaceful coexistence. Additionally, since most French colonists were single males, many took native wives, thus marriage ties further strengthened alliances with various tribes.

English colonies advanced very differently than their European neighbors to the north. A burgeoning population and longer growing season ensured that the English colonies did not retain dependency on natives for survival. Additionally, the English colonies were expansionist. They experienced increasing demands for native lands for their children, new immigrants, and speculative profits. Consequently, English diplomacy vis-à-vis native tribes was not nearly as accommodating as French diplomacy.

The Iroquois, French, and English competition over the Ohio River Valley culminated in the French and Indian War. While everyone involved participated in combined warfare and campaigns, their tactical and strategic objectives were not always the same. Additionally, the clash of cultures, even amongst allies, often created unintended consequences and significant information operations failures. Both the English and the French experienced the adverse effects caused by the inability to command and control one's allies.

Conclusion: Neither the French nor the English enjoyed effective command and control of their Amerindian allies during the quest for empire in North America. Both utilized diplomacy to build alliances, influence tribes, and establish profitable trade with native peoples; however, once at war, the European powers failed to fully discern the dichotomy between their own security interests and strategic objectives and those of their native allies. Consequently, the actions of one coalition partner in the furtherance of its own strategic objectives and values could create negative consequences for the strategic objectives of all other coalition partners.

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## *Preface*

I first became interested in American Indians as a child. The ways in which the various tribes interacted with English colonists and subsequently American expansionists have fascinated me for years. I recall reading and rereading a biography of Geronimo while I attended Middle School. A few years later, I discovered Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, and I have been a student of Amerindians ever since.

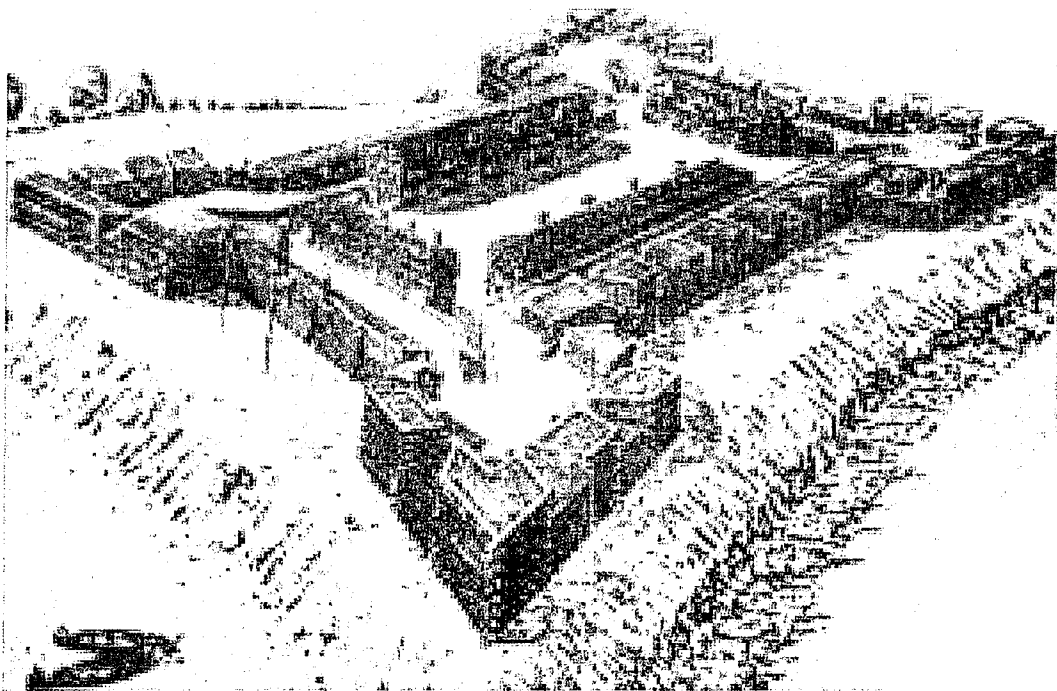
This study is relevant for those in the profession of arms and for today's statesmen. As our nation continues to prosecute counterinsurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq, the lessons of nearly three centuries of conflict with Native Americans continue to resonate. Themes such as coalition warfare, cultural differences, war amongst the people, and parallel warfare with different strategic objectives are just as relevant today as they were in the 17th and 18th centuries. The French and Indian War provides the backdrop for this paper; however, only a few historic examples are utilized to illustrate key points. As such, the paper does not address the entire war.

As a student at Command and Staff College, I have been afforded the opportunity to focus my interests regarding Amerindians and early American history during several classes. I am thankful for the guidance and assistance of Dr. Donald Bittner and Dr. John Gordon, two professors at the USMC Command and Staff College.



### **JUMONVILLE'S GLEN**

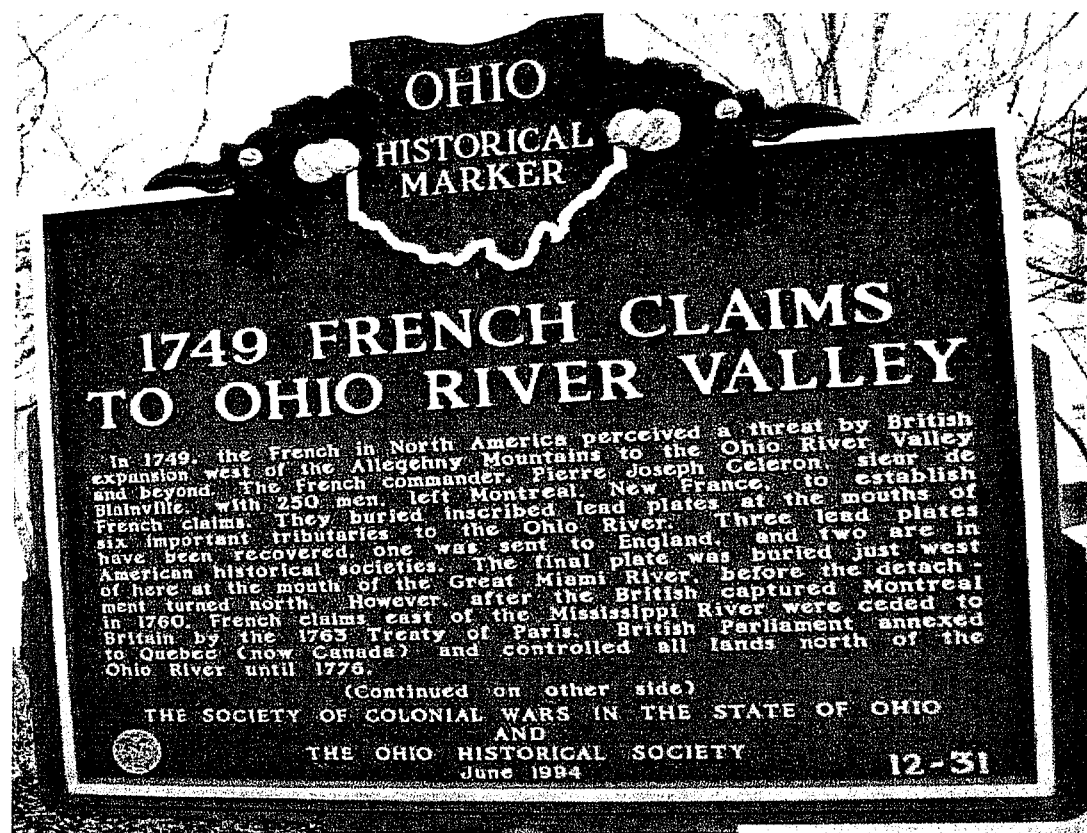
On 28 May 1754, Major George Washington's Indian allies slaughtered approximately 10 French prisoners of war. How did a coalition partner fighting a parallel war, but with different strategic objectives, help precipitate a struggle for empire in North America and a global war?



### **FORT WILLIAM HENRY**

How did the 10 August 1757 "Massacre at Fort William Henry" reflect diplomatic and cross-cultural issues in North America?





## *INTRODUCTION*

The French and Indian War of 1754-1763 was the fourth and final struggle for colonial dominance in North America. The long struggle for empire in North America between France and England began with King William's War (1689-97), followed by Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), King George's War (1744-1748), and finally the French and Indian War.<sup>1</sup> During each conflict, both the French and English enlisted Amerindian aid; however, the strategic objectives within each alliance were usually quite different. While the European powers warred over economics, trade, and territory, Native Americans agreed to enter each conflict "based on what they considered their best interests in protecting their territories, maintaining trade, or settling old intertribal scores."<sup>2</sup> Cultural impacts on coalition warfare and differing strategic objectives among Amerindians and the European powers are the focus of this paper. Although the French and Indian War often found Europeans and Native Americans fighting alongside one another, expectations regarding strategic objectives, tactical objectives, and even concepts of operations for campaigns varied greatly. While the European powers, especially the French, recognized that different expectations and goals existed within coalitions involving Amerindians, they did not fully perceive the strategic implications that could result from the uncontrolled actions of native partners.

## *EUROPEAN AND AMERINDIAN WAR AND CULTURE*

The chief virtue of these poor Pagans being cruelty, just as mildness is that of Christians, they teach it to their children from their very cradles, and accustom them to the most atrocious carnage and the most barbarous spectacles.

Jesuit missionary Paul Le Juene in  
reference to the Iroquois, 1657<sup>3</sup>

### *DISEASE*

Two and a half centuries of Amerindian and European exchange and interaction fundamentally altered several aspects of native culture. The most significant exchange between indigenous peoples and Europeans was pathogens. In his Pulitzer Prize winning book Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies, Jared Diamond notes, "The major killers of humanity throughout our recent history – smallpox, flu, tuberculosis, malaria, plague, measles, and cholera – are infectious diseases that evolved from diseases of animals..."<sup>4</sup> Daily contact with domesticated animals enabled European societies to develop resistances and immunities to diseases that were completely foreign to Amerindians. Once infectious microbes such as smallpox, measles, chickenpox, influenza, and diphtheria were introduced to Amerindian societies, the results were catastrophic. One case study asserts that an Amerindian society east of the Mississippi River shrank from two million people to less than a quarter-million by 1750; this amounted to a population decrease of almost 90%.<sup>5</sup>

Epidemics struck various tribes at various times with varying results over the course of several decades. Significantly, historian Fred Anderson explains, "This decline did not occur simultaneously everywhere on the continent, however, but piecemeal, always striking those native populations in continuous contact with Europeans first. The groups that suffered the initial damage needed to limit their losses if they were to remain viable cultural, social, economic, and military entities."<sup>6</sup> Diminished populations gave rise to frequent "mourning wars." Because an individual's death diminished the collective power of a tribal unit, many

Amerindians utilized warfare as a means to replenish tribal losses through the taking of captives.<sup>7</sup> Women and children were especially coveted during mourning wars because they were more easily assimilated into tribal society than men.<sup>8</sup>

### ***TRADE AND DEPENDENCY***

Trade between Amerindians and Europeans altered native culture and lifestyles in unexpected ways. By 1754, European trade goods had created native dependency on French and English manufacturers. This dependency was most noticeable in regards to firearms and ammunition; however, the Europeans also introduced metal arrowheads, axes, knives, and hatchets.<sup>9</sup> While some historians disagree regarding the nature and extent of native dependency on European tools, clothing, and cooking accessories, Alan Taylor notes, "By the mid-seventeenth century, trade goods were sufficiently common that the northeastern Algonquian peoples had forsaken their stones and weapons – and the craft skills needed to produce them. If cut off from trade, natives faced depredation, hunger, and destruction by their enemies."<sup>10</sup> Additionally, in 1753, just prior to the commencement of hostilities of the French and Indian War, a Cherokee Chief named Skiagunsta observed, "The Cloaths we wear, we cannot make ourselves, they are made [for] us. We use their ammunition with which we kill deer. We cannot make our Guns. Every necessary Thing in Life we must have from the White People."<sup>11</sup> For Amerindian tribes, trade thus became a matter of survival. For them, their vital strategic interests mandated access to European manufactured trade goods and, consequently, virtually assured their participation in the imperial wars of North America.

Amerindian dependency on European weapons is even more persuasive. European weapons proved so vital to native food acquisition, warfare, and strategic interests that tribes often considered trade restrictions as tantamount to an act of war. Additionally, natives strived to

monopolize the arms trade to bolster tribal strength vis-s-vis their native enemies, while at the same time limiting weapons access to competing tribes. In essence, native groups that were able to obtain numerous European weapons were also able to dominate other native groups that did not enjoy the same access. As Taylor observed, "Harsh experiences had taught them [Amerindians] that any people cut off from the gun trade faced destruction by their native enemies. Consequently, they considered any cessation of trade or escalation of prices to be acts of hostility, demanding war."<sup>12</sup>

### ***WAR AND CULTURE***

The proliferation of European weapons among Amerindians significantly altered historic native warfare. War had long been a central tenet of Amerindian tribal society; however, prior to interaction with Europeans, warfare was more limited in both objective and intensity.

Amerindian tribal societies did not subscribe to a centralized political authority, thus each individual possessed a great considerable amount of autonomy.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, native leaders required prestige, generosity, and influence among the people. The path to leadership typically began with success and bravery in warfare. Amerindian culture placed a significant emphasis on personal bravery, and warfare provided the avenue whereby young warriors might obtain prestige within their tribe. With prestige came influence and thus better opportunities for tribal leadership and marriage prospects.<sup>14</sup>

Warfare also provided warriors with the opportunity to obtain plunder. While plunder was secondary to obtaining prestige and captives, the benefits of seizing enemy weapons, material, and trade goods became increasingly important to Amerindian societies.<sup>15</sup> For example, seizing other tribes' pelts served two purposes: stolen furs were used to obtain European trade goods, especially weapons and ammunition, and the seizure prevented the victimized tribe from

obtaining the same trade goods and weapons. Furthermore, stealing pelts was more efficient than hunting and trapping the animals for themselves, especially after years of over hunting had drastically diminished fur-producing species.

Perhaps the most significant impact on Native American culture and warfare was the increasing demand for captives. Disease and increasingly lethal warfare had decimated native peoples, and Amerindians overwhelmingly turned to war to compensate for their losses. As Anderson explained, "The only way to maintain population levels in the face of such devastation was for the survivors to undertake raiding expeditions against other groups in mourning wars."<sup>16</sup> "Mourning War" is a term that ethnologists use to describe the Amerindian practice of restoring lost population, maintaining a viable social and cultural infrastructure, and responding to bereavement.<sup>17</sup> Unprecedented epidemics, coupled with increased combat losses, created a frantic desire to replace lost populations through captive taking, thus a brutal and perpetual cycle of violence ensued.<sup>18</sup> Amerindians raided other Amerindians for the purposes of capturing women and young children and "adopting" them into the tribe. In turn, the victimized tribe sought revenge and captives to replace its own losses. Inevitably, warriors were killed and wounded while participating in "mourning war" conflicts, and these losses would also have to be replaced. Thus raid provoked counter raid, captive-taking begat captive-taking, and escalation incited escalation.<sup>19</sup>

Adult males were also prized during mourning wars but for different purposes than women and children. In most cases, teenage males and adult men were not considered suitable adoptees, hence they faced horrific deaths, accompanied by long periods, sometimes days, of the most indescribable pain imaginable. Victims were tortured, and sometimes eaten, as part of a religious ritual in which the entire community, both males and females of all ages, participated.<sup>20</sup>

Although rituals varied from tribe to tribe, Taylor's comment regarding the Iroquois Confederacy could apply to many Native Americans: "By practicing ceremonial torture, and cannibalism, the Iroquois promoted group cohesion, hardened their adolescent boys for the cruelties of war, and dramatized their contempt for outsiders."<sup>21</sup> Additionally, many Amerindians believed that by torturing and eating their victims they harnessed and absorbed the captive's power. Despite colonial and European history concerning human rights abuses, Europeans were horrified at the widespread communal torture that was so prevalent in Amerindian society.

By the middle of the 17th century, the Iroquois Confederacy had escalated warfare against other Amerindians to near genocidal proportions. Frequently, the Iroquois targeted their ethnic cousins for mourning war. Captives that were culturally and linguistically similar to the Confederacy proved to be easier to assimilate.<sup>22</sup> During the 1640s and 1650s, native on native violence reached unprecedented levels. Richard White observes, "The coupling of the demands of the fur trade with Iroquois cultural imperatives for prisoners and victims created an engine of destruction that broke up the region's peoples. Never again in North America would Indians fight each other on this scale or with this ferocity."<sup>23</sup> One Jesuit priest noted, "So far as I can divine, it is the design of the Iroquois to capture all the Hurons, if it is possible; to put the chiefs and the great part of the men to death, and with the rest to form one nation and one country."<sup>24</sup> Additionally, the Iroquois also burned Huron villages and crops in an effort to deter their captives from fleeing their new homes. The campaign against the Hurons was so effective that one stray Huron warrior sought captivity for himself, explaining, "The country of the Hurons is no longer where it was – you have transported it into your own. It is there that I was going, to join my relatives and compatriots, who are now but one people with yourselves."<sup>25</sup> The fate of

the Hurons also awaited the Erie, Petun, Neutral, and Susquehannock as the Iroquois sought ever more captives to compensate for its diseased and its war casualties.<sup>26</sup>

Although assimilating captives was easier if language and cultural similarities existed, Amerindians did not bypass the opportunity to take captives from wholly different native groups or even Europeans. Biases stemming from race were not nearly as prevalent among natives. Richter notes the great importance Amerindians placed on captives: "The social demands of the mourning-war shaped strategy and tactics in at least two ways. First, the essential measure of a war party's success was its ability to seize prisoners and bring them home alive. [Second]...none of the benefits European combatants derived from war – territorial expansion, economic gain, plunder of the defeated – outranked the seizure of prisoners."<sup>27</sup>

As with any people, culture and strategy shaped the way in which Amerindians conducted warfare; however, during the struggle for empire in 18th century North America, coalition warfare frequently highlighted the differences between European and native strategic objectives, moral values, and conduct during campaigns.

### ***TRIBAL GROUPS***

For 1754 marked the end of the prolonged collapse of a half-century-old strategic balance in eastern North America – a tripartite equilibrium in which the Iroquois Confederacy occupied a crucial position, both geographically and diplomatically, between the French and the English colonial empires.

Fred Anderson, Crucible of War (2001)<sup>28</sup>

### ***IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY***

Calling themselves *Haudenosaunee*, meaning *People of the Longhouse*, the Six Nations of the Iroquois consisted of the Seneca, Mohawk, Onondaga, Cayuga, Oneida, and Tuscarora tribes.<sup>29</sup> (The Iroquois Confederacy, originally consisting of five nations, expanded to the Six-Nations when the Tuscarora joined in the early 1700s. For the purposes of this paper, no distinction will



be made between the "Five-Nations" and the "Six-Nations" of the Iroquois Confederacy.) Exercising their own version of empire, the Iroquois dominated a vast swath of terrain that stretched from the upper Hudson River westward to the Ohio River Valley.<sup>30</sup> The strategic location of Iroquoia enabled the Confederacy to control the best route across the Appalachian Mountains barrier and portions of several major waterways that flowed in all directions (i.e. Hudson, Delaware, Susquehanna, St. Lawrence, Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio Rivers).<sup>31</sup> Additionally, the Iroquois controlled an immense, strategic buffer between the French in Canada and the English colonies, particularly New England.

In the midst of deep-seeded tribal societies, the union of the six nations formed the most dominant Amerindian group in the Northeast. For more than a century before the French and Indian War erupted in the backcountry of Pennsylvania, imperialism was the predominate strategy by which the Iroquois Confederacy prospered.<sup>32</sup> From 1649 to 1655, the Iroquois reached the pinnacle of their power after destroying and / or assimilating several rival tribes (including the Huron, Neutrals, Petuns, and Eries) and forcing others to flee westward during the Beaver Wars.<sup>33</sup> Anderson notes that the Iroquois "[...had eliminated whole peoples from the Ohio River Valley and the lower Great Lakes Basin, conducting expeditions that ranged from modern Wisconsin to northern New England and from the Arctic shield of Ontario to South Carolina."<sup>34</sup> By the end of the 17th century, however, continuous warfare and disease had depleted the Confederacy's population at a quicker rate than it could be replenished through natural birth or adopted captives.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, western tribes allied with the French began to push back on the western edge of Iroquoia while the English colonists continued to expand in the southeast.

Recognizing their tenuous strategic position, Iroquois leaders inaugurated a new era of Iroquois diplomacy in 1701.<sup>36</sup> For the next half century, the Six-Nations weaved a delicate balance between rival European empires by exploiting competitive trade practices of both England and France, while at the same time fostering the perception of military neutrality. The Confederacy also pursued two additional policies that complimented their neutrality: hostility towards southern tribes (Cherokee and Catawba), which provided war and prestige opportunities for warriors, and trade-based diplomatic relations with French-allied western tribes from the *pays d'en haut* (the French upper country surrounding the five eastern Great Lakes).<sup>37</sup> Peaceful trade between the Iroquois and the western tribes would have significant consequences for North America because it facilitated the introduction of British trade goods into the French dominated Ohio River Valley and *pays d'en haut*.

### ***WESTERN TRIBES***

During the 1640s and 1650s, survivors of the relentless and expanding Iroquois fled further westward and resettled along the Illinois River, the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, and the southern shore of Lake Superior. Refugee villages formed a diverse mixture of "...Fox, Sauk, Mascouten, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Miami, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Wyandot, Winnebago, Menominee, and Illinois."<sup>38</sup> Once settled, the tribes faced other problems than the periodic Iroquois attacks. Disease continued to ravage their populations as they came in close contact with French traders, priests, and government officials. Swelling numbers of refugees depleted natural resources, including fur bearing animals, game, and fish. Conflict between the varying tribes inevitable led to bloodshed. According to Taylor, "Disputes over fishing places and hunting grounds, as well as accusations of witchcraft, led to murders, which provoked revenge killings in an apparently unbreakable cycle."<sup>39</sup>

Like the Iroquois, the western tribes turned to diplomacy for survival. They desperately required European trade goods, especially weapons, to counter the distinct technological advantage of the Iroquois. Additionally, they required a mechanism to settle refugee disputes without resorting to an endless cycle of violence. Only by growing their population and focusing on their common enemy, the Iroquois Confederacy, could the western tribes hope to overcome the significant military threat of their native oppressor. The French met both refugee requirements, and by the 18th century, French native allies had gained enough strength to push back the western edge of Iroquoia and resettle western portions of the Ohio River Valley.<sup>40</sup> French interests in North America, however, were not served by either the destruction or complete removal of the Iroquois Confederacy. As historian William Eccles explains, "[...French policy was to preserve the Iroquois as a barrier between first the Dutch then the English on the Hudson River, and the northwestern tribes, for both economic and military reasons."<sup>41</sup> Consequently, in 1701, the Iroquois and the western tribes began a long period of relative peace. The cessation of hostilities, however, provided the French-allied western tribes with greater access to better-quality, lower-priced British manufactured trade goods. This peace meant a diversion of precious northern furs from Québec to Albany, an intolerable proposition for France in the highly competitive world of 18th century imperial trade. France desired peace with the Iroquois but not too much peace.

## *FRENCH COLONISTS*

### *SMALL POPULATION*

Despite Samuel de Champlain's arrival at Québec in 1608, Canada's colonial population on the eve of the French and Indian War was only about 55,000.<sup>42</sup> Persistent concerns regarding survivability of the French settlements in the New World mandated closer diplomatic ties with

their Amerindian neighbors. The short growing season in Canada, lack of large farms and planters, and unpredictability of shipping times necessitated a reliance on Amerindian agriculture.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, French interests in Canada were predominantly related to trade, particularly the fur trade; however, the fur trade was exceptionally laborious. Traders needed men to hunt the animals in their native habitat, process the furs, and transport them to trading sites. As fur-bearing animals became more and more scarce, hunters were forced to travel further afield to acquire pelts. The northern tribes were ideally suited for fur trading as they were superior hunters who enjoyed a much higher degree of access and force protection than white European hunters.<sup>44</sup>

Fortunately for the French, their small numbers required less land than their British neighbors to the south. Consequently, the French were perceived as being less intrusive and less greedy for land. As one Amerindian observed, "Are you ignorant of the difference between our Father [the French Governor] and the English? Go and see the forts our Father has created, and you will see that the land beneath their walls is still hunting ground, having fixed himself in those places we frequent only to supply our wants; whilst the English, on the contrary, no sooner get possession of a country than the game is forced to leave; the trees fall down before them, the earth becomes bare."<sup>45</sup> Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the French were dependent on Amerindians for protection from other natives, for guides to and from the interior of the continent, and for safe passage while conducting trade. New France and its outposts throughout North America depended on the sufferance of their Amerindian neighbors for survival.

### *PAYS D'EN HAUT*

After settling Québec, the French migrated down the St Lawrence River and its tributaries to extend their trading influence westward into the Great Lakes Basin. Historian Richard White

describes the western area “as a common mutually, comprehensible world” that the French called the *pays d'en haut*, or upper country.”<sup>46</sup> The *pays d'en haut* included the areas surrounding Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, and Lake Superior and was bordered on the south by the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers; however, it did not include the area surrounding Lake Ontario, which fell within the confines of Iroquoia. Coincidentally, native refugees fleeing the relentless Iroquois Confederacy populated the *pays d'en haut* west of Lake Michigan in present-day Wisconsin.

In the *pays d'en haut*, the French accepted the cultural role of *Onontio*, or Father, for the refugee western tribes. In Amerindian society, fathers were not authoritarian or dominant figures. On the contrary, many northeastern Amerindian tribes were matriarchal, with husbands moving into the wife’s tribe or clan and possessing little authority. Mothers and uncles wielded the real authority while fathers were perceived as “indulgent, generous, and weak.”<sup>47</sup> The French nicely filled the diplomatic role of “cultural father” by settling disputes, giving generous gifts, fostering trade, and building an alliance among numerous and diverse native tribes, some of which were historic enemies. As one Jesuit priest observed, “It is absolutely necessary to keep all these tribes...in peace and union against a common enemy – that is, the Iroquois.”<sup>48</sup>

### ***FRENCH DIPLOMACY***

Within New France, and especially the *pays d'en haut*, the French and their Amerindian neighbors crafted a mutual system of cultural interaction that facilitated trade, diplomacy, and peaceful coexistence. As Richard White explains:

Rather, it was because Algonquians who were perfectly comfortable with their status and practices as Indians and Frenchmen, comfortable in the rightness of French ways, nonetheless had to deal with people who shared neither their values nor their assumptions about the appropriate way of accomplishing tasks. They had to arrive at some common conception of suitable ways of acting; they had to create what I already referred to as the Middle Ground<sup>49</sup>

Due to their small population and dependency on Amerindians, the French pursued a policy of accommodation through inter-marriage, adopting cultural practices, and respecting tribal autonomy.

Most immigrants to New France were single males, and, inevitably, many of these men took native women as their wives. Marriage ties with various Amerindian tribes also yielded several ancillary benefits: better intelligence, greater understanding of native culture, and family bonds with native tribes. As military historian Alan Millett notes, "Less race-conscious than Englishmen, Frenchmen embraced Indian culture in ways alien to the British, and the natives recognized the difference."<sup>50</sup>

French dependency on Amerindians for survival necessitated a policy of cultural accommodation and respect for tribal autonomy. Despite their technological advantages in weaponry, the French simply did not possess the numbers to enforce their will on the native population. Consequently, French officials and traders accepted native protocol for trade, diplomacy, and adjudication of crimes. Taylor recounts an incident in which a drunken mission native killed a French colonist. He explains, "The colonial authorities dared not attempt an arrest and trial, for the mission Indian did not submit to French law. Instead the officials had to accept the native ceremony of covering the grave: the ceremonial delivery of presents from the Indians to the relatives of the deceased to settle the murder."<sup>51</sup> British response to a similar incident in New England would not have been as accommodating or as lenient. The difference in responses illustrates the difference in sovereignty: the French depended on Amerindians for survival but the English had reached self-sufficiency in the New World.

Ironically, French diplomacy in the New World required a state of quasi-conflict with the Iroquois Confederacy. French interests were predicated on trade, but the French could compete

with neither the quality of British manufactured trade goods nor the cheap British prices.<sup>52</sup> Since trade goods and gifts provided the substance for the French-Native alliance from Louisiana to the *pays d'en haut* to Québec, the French depended on limited hostilities and mutual distrust between the western tribes and the Iroquois to stem the flow of influential British trade goods to the Ohio River Valley and beyond.<sup>53</sup> Optimally, this animosity would not result in large-scale war. Limited raids and terrain denial between the Iroquois and the western tribes best served the interests of Québec

## **ENGLISH COLONISTS**

### **LARGE POPULATION**

In stark contrast to the French, by 1754 the British colonial population was about 1.2 million, or about 21 times the population of New France.<sup>54</sup> By the 18th century, most immigrants to the British colonies were arriving as family units vice single males, and the families were seeking large plots of land upon which to farm and ultimately to divide and bequeath to their children.<sup>55</sup> With a better ratio of colonial females than New France, inter-marriage among British males and native women was not nearly as prevalent. Thus, children born in Britain's North American colonies were decidedly more European in culture. Consequently, the British colonies experienced rapid and sustained population growth, and by the time of the French and Indian War, the colonies retained little if any dependence on Amerindians for survival. Longer growing seasons and multiple farms combined to produce adequate fruits, vegetables, and meat to sustain a burgeoning population.

Differences in land use created animosity between the colonies and the natives. In order to facilitate crops for both sustainment and for profit, English subjects cleared and fenced large parcels of land that was considered by Amerindians to be either their own or for communal use.

One Narragansett Chief, Miantonomi, reflected the views of many tribes that experienced sustained contact with the British, "[...you know our fathers had plenty of deer and skins, our plains were full of deer, as also our woods, and of turkeys, and our coves full of fish and fowl. But these English have gotten our land, they with scythes cut down the grass and with axes fell the trees; their cows and horses eat the grass, and their hogs spoil our clam banks, and we shall be starved."<sup>56</sup>

### *EXPANSIONIST*

The colonies required additional lands for both their progeny and for new immigrants. For example, in New England, Captain John Smith inspired numerous Puritans to undertake the arduous journey across the Atlantic, "Here every man may be master of his own labor and land...and by industry grow rich."<sup>57</sup> Puritans typically immigrated as groups, thus land requirements were even greater than family units. Additionally, their strict form of Christianity emphasized hard work and the struggle to conquer nature as a metaphor for the inner struggle of righteousness over sin. As Taylor observes, "The New English saw the Indians as their opposite – as pagan peoples who had surrendered to their worst instincts to live within the wild, instead of laboring hard to conquer and transcend nature."<sup>58</sup> Consequently, the Puritans' theology fueled both a need for larger tracts of land and for land speculators who were eager to acquire Indian territory in the hopes of selling it to Puritan families.

A similar search for land unfolded throughout the other colonies. In Pennsylvania, vast numbers of squatters invaded both Indian and privately owned colonial lands. In 1729, James Logan, the Penn family's provincial secretary, warned the Penn heirs of "vast numbers of poor but Presumptuous People, who without any License have entered on your Lands, & neither have, nor are like to have anything to purchase with."<sup>59</sup> By the spring of 1745, the Virginia House of



Burgesses had granted nearly 300,000 acres in the Ohio River Valley to the Ohio Company of Virginia (a syndicate of twenty rich land speculators).<sup>60</sup> The competition for land and sovereignty in the Ohio River Valley between England (particularly Virginia and Pennsylvania), France, the Iroquois, and the western tribes would propel North America down a path of war.

### ***ENGLISH DIPLOMACY***

English diplomacy in the North American colonies actively supported land expansion but failed to provide any semblance of centralized unity. Unlike the French who established a Governor-General to unify diplomacy efforts for colonial leaders, the military, and the church, the thirteen British colonies in North America consistently negotiated separate treaties and policies without respect for their sister colonies. Consequently, many Amerindians were confused regarding disparate colonial interests and policies. Also, several of the colonial governors were financially involved in land speculation companies. For example, in 1754 Virginia Lieutenant Governor, Robert Dinwiddie, a stockholder in the Ohio Company of Virginia, commissioned and dispatched Major George Washington, himself having close connections to the Ohio Company, to inform the French that their recently built forts in the Ohio Valley were a violation of Virginia sovereignty and must be removed.<sup>61</sup> More importantly for Dinwiddie, the French forts occupied land claimed by the Ohio Company from the Logstown Treaty of 1752. Since Dinwiddie's arrival in the colonies in 1751, he had enjoyed a 5% stake in the future profits of the Ohio Company, thus his decisions as Lieutenant Governor were also heavily influenced by his personal financial considerations.<sup>62</sup> Virginia was not alone; through various royal land grants, claims, and schemes, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania were also coveting portions of the Ohio River Valley.<sup>63</sup> As opposed to a much

more unified French diplomatic policy relative to Amerindians, the colonies were thus plagued by incessant rivalries and disputes.

Ironically, the thirst for land among the British colonies created closer diplomatic ties with the Iroquois Confederacy. The Six-Nations claimed sovereignty over other tribes in both the Hudson and Ohio River Valleys, and, consequently, the Iroquois had no qualms about selling their dependent's land to the English. All too eager to indulge Iroquois pretensions, colonies purchased native lands through the Iroquois in return for weapons, ammunition, and manufactured trade goods.<sup>64</sup>

### *PARALLEL WARFARE*

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the French and the English engaged in four imperial wars for empire in North America. Yet both European powers required native allies to prosecute their war efforts. Consequently, each engaged in successful recruiting efforts among Amerindians. Although many Native Americans tribes agreed to "take up the hatchet" in support of either France or England, natives did not do so to further European hegemony in North America. Amerindians agreed to participate in hostilities for a multitude of different reasons: captives, prestige, plunder, gifts, revenge, land, and other strategic objectives. Intelligent military commanders understood that native involvement in military campaigns was frequently the result of very different strategic objectives than those of Europeans. Richard White describes the dichotomy of strategic objectives while participating in a common campaign as parallel war.<sup>65</sup> France and her native allies participated in combined military campaigns; however, the reasons for participating in the campaign and the objectives each pursued during combat operations were not in congruence.

## JUMONVILLE'S GLEN

Despite the considerable influence that both the French and the British held over various Native American tribes, they were never able to exercise sound command and control over their Amerindian allies in war. As European and Amerindian cultures collided, French and English officials should have predicted secondary and tertiary collisions over objectives, tactics, and ethics in warfare.<sup>66</sup> Without the foresight or the means to exercise sound command and control over their native allies, Europeans often suffered from the unintended consequences created by the actions of their native allies.

On 28 May 1754, Virginia militia Major George Washington, accompanied by about 40 colonials and a handful of Indian guides, engaged a smaller French military party under the command of 35 year old *troupes de la marine* Ensign Joseph Coulon de Villiers de Jumonville near Great Meadows in western Pennsylvania. Tanaghrisson, a Mingo Chief from the Ohio River Valley and a dependent of the Iroquois, offered to guide Washington and his men. The Virginian's purpose, as commissioned by Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie, was to order the French off lands claimed by Virginia and "belonging" to the Ohio Company of Virginia. Controversy surrounds who initiated the fight, but the skirmish was over in only a few minutes. Washington suffered only three casualties compared to about eleven for the French. Ensign Jumonville was one of the wounded, but he had enough strength to explain that he came in peace bearing a message from King Louis XV that ordered the English to withdraw from French possessions.<sup>67</sup> While Washington studied the letter, Tanaghrisson stepped in front of the wounded Jumonville and said, "Thou art not yet dead, my father." The warrior then buried his hatchet in Jumonville's head and washed his hands with Jumonville's brains, while the other

warriors killed nine more of the wounded and scalped the bodies. Only one of the wounded Frenchmen survived.

After a few indecisive moments, Washington surrounded the remaining 21 surviving Frenchmen in an effort to protect them from additional slaughter. Tanaghrisson, however, had accomplished his purposes. Why had he committed such a gruesome murder? Anderson explains, "The last words Jumonville heard on earth were spoken in the language of ritual and diplomacy, which cast the French father (Onontio) as the mediator, gift-giver, and alliance-maker among Indian peoples. Tanaghrisson's metaphorical words, followed by his literal killing of the father, explicitly denied French authority and testified to the premeditation of his act."<sup>68</sup> Although Washington and Tanaghrisson shared a common tactical goal (defeat the French military party), their strategic goals were significantly different. The Mingo Chief was making a political statement by killing Jumonville: he was declaring war on the French – on his behalf and on the behalf of the Virginians.<sup>69</sup> Tanaghrisson realized that he desperately required British support if he hoped to reestablish his (and the Six-Nations') authority on the Ohio over the western tribes and the French military. Consequently, he wished to provoke the French into retaliating in such a manner that would galvanize the English (particularly Virginia and Pennsylvania) into action relative to the control of the Ohio River Valley.<sup>70</sup> He succeeded; the European struggle for sovereignty over the prized valley would inflame North America for the next six years.

Major Washington had willingly accepted Tanaghrisson's assistance during the mission, but evidently the future President did not consider the unintended consequences of accepting native help. While both Washington and Tanaghrisson shared a common enemy in the French, both their strategic objectives and the manner in which they pursued those objectives differed

significantly. Ironically, in a conflict that was eventually to spread from North America and encompass much of the globe, the first death was caused by a coalition partner acting beyond the control of the "Commander". A similar theme followed as coalition warfare became more prevalent the war.

### ***FORT WILLIAM HENRY***

The English were not the only Europeans to experience the unintended consequences that resulted from parallel warfare. During the spring and summer of 1757, the French Governor-General of New France, Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, eagerly recruited about 2,000 Amerindians for a planned summer offensive against Fort William Henry. Anderson notes, "[...the Indians came in numbers that exceeded even Vaudreuil's fondest hopes and included warriors who had traveled as far as fifteen hundred miles to join the expedition."<sup>71</sup> The military commander of the campaign, Lieutenant General Louis-Joseph Montcalm, utilized about 979 Indians from the *pays d'en haut*, 820 Catholic Indians, and 6,000 French regulars, *troupes de la marine*, and Canadian militia to assault Fort William Henry in New York on 10 August 1757.<sup>72</sup> Difficulties arising from conflicting cultures were inevitable. The Amerindians reflected at least 33 different nations, speaking almost as many languages, and with varying degrees of cultural familiarity.<sup>73</sup>

By failing to understand Amerindian culture and motivations, the European raised, trained, and indoctrinated Lieutenant-General Montcalm failed to anticipate, and therefore mitigate, native behavior on the battlefield. His experience in North American parallel warfare, however, had already demonstrated the difficulties involved in effectively maintaining command and control of his native allies. For example, one year earlier on 12 August 1756, Montcalm's native allies had massacred up to 100 prisoners after capturing Fort Oswego in upstate New York.<sup>74</sup>

Additionally, just a few weeks prior to taking Fort William Henry, Lieutenant Colonel George Monro, the Fort Commander, had dispatched five companies of New Jersey provincials to conduct an amphibious raid on French sawmills. They floated into an ambush of 500 Indians and Canadians. Montcalm's aide-de-camp, Louis Antoine de Bougainville, described the aftermath,

The Indians jumped into the water and speared them like fish... We had only one man slightly wounded. The English, terrified by the shooting, the sight, the cries, and the agility of these monsters, surrendered almost without firing a shot. The rum which was in the barges and which the Indians immediately drank caused them to commit great cruelties. They put in the pot and ate three prisoners, and perhaps others were so treated. All have become slaves unless they are ransomed. A horrible spectacle to European eyes.<sup>75</sup>

Following the successful siege of Fort William Henry, Montcalm and Monro agreed upon capitulation terms for the English force on 9 August 1757. The soldiers within the fort would remain noncombatants "on parole" for a period of 18 months, and the entire garrison would be granted safe passage to another English fort.<sup>76</sup> While the terms of capitulation were wholly consistent with European notions of limited warfare, honor, and noble conduct between gentlemen, they outraged Montcalm's native allies. Amerindians desired the prestige from combat, scalps to prove their valor, plunder to trade as currency, and captives to adopt or torture. Montcalm's terms with the English were wholly unacceptable to Amerindian sensibilities and grossly conflicted with their cultural values. At about 5 a.m. on 10 August, the official day of the surrender, Montcalm's native allies suddenly attacked the rear of the English column, massacring about 185 provincials and camp followers and taking 300-500 into captivity.<sup>77</sup> Montcalm, greatly embarrassed at having failed to both prevent and stop the slaughter, ransomed about half of the captives, a practice that deeply offended Amerindian culture and protocol.<sup>78</sup>

French and Amerindian relations were irreparably damaged because of the incident. Despite Vaudreuil's continued eagerness to recruit and widely utilize natives in the war effort, Montcalm

was more reluctant than ever to use Amerindians as coalition partners except for specific and limited purposes such as guides and interpreters. Amerindians, still stinging from Montcalm's breach of protocol, never again flocked to French military campaigns during the French and Indian War.<sup>79</sup> One warrior later commented, "I make war for plunder, scalps, and prisoners. You are satisfied with a fort, and you let your enemy and mine live. I do not want to keep such bad meat for tomorrow. When I kill it, it can no longer attack me."<sup>80</sup> For the French, the remaining years of the war would be fought largely in a conventional or Europeanized manner, without the aid of meaningful assistance from Native Americans.

The massacre at Fort William Henry also served as a successful information operations campaign for the English. News of the tragedy spread throughout the colonies and Europe. The *New York Mercury* wrote, "Surely if any nation under the heavens was ever provoked to the most rigid severities in the conduct of war, it is ours! Will it not be strictly just and absolutely necessary, from henceforward...that we make some severe examples of our inhuman enemies, when they fall into our hands?"<sup>81</sup> Consequently, the English did not feel obligated to extend the honors of war to any French military force after the massacre at Fort William Henry.

### **CONCLUSION**

Neither the French nor the English enjoyed effective command and control of their Amerindian allies during the quest for empire in North America. Both utilized diplomacy to build alliances, influence tribes, and establish profitable trade with native peoples; however, once at war, the European powers failed to fully discern the dichotomy between their own security interests and strategic objectives and those of their native allies. Additionally, the Iroquois Confederacy skillfully maneuvered between the rival European powers in an attempt to restore and expand their own hegemony over the Ohio River Valley. The actions taken by Tanaghrisson

at Jumonville's Glen and the western tribes of the *pays d'en haut* at Fort William Henry are vivid reminders of the unintended consequences that can result when engaging in parallel warfare with coalition partners.

A study of diplomacy during the period surrounding the French and Indian War yields several lessons that still resonate today. The United States is actively engaged in combat operation in Iraq and Afghanistan with multiple coalition partners. Each country participating in the conflict has agreed to do so for their own national security interests, and those interests, accompanied by differing cultural values, may or may not be in congruence with the interests and values of the United States. Additionally, the U.S. is partnering with dozens of countries around the globe for theatre security cooperation, and the motivations and objectives of its international partners must be considered with great prudence. As in the French and Indian War, the actions of one coalition partner in the furtherance of its own strategic objectives and values could create negative consequences for the strategic objectives of all other coalition partners.

In order to effectively mitigate the actions of a coalition partner that might result in adverse secondary and tertiary effects, a sound understanding of the coalition partner's history and culture is essential. Too often, a coalition correctly focuses on the history and culture of the enemy, but at the same time neglects relevant historical and cultural aspects of its allies. Do all coalition partners share the same values regarding the treatment of prisoners? How do they view non-combatants? Do they share the same strategic objectives, or are they merely engaging in parallel warfare? In an era of war amongst the people and globalized telecommunications, the enemy can quickly capitalize on real and perceived injustices, and an effective information operations campaign by the enemy can significantly alter both local and international public opinion. Finally, if and when cultural friction points have been identified, commanders must



skillfully and diplomatically mitigate potential problems without greatly offending the coalition partner.

## *Appendix A*

### Basic Chronology of Events

#### **1754**

May 28 Major Washington attacks Ensign Jumonville; massacre of French POWs

#### **1755**

July 9 MajGen Braddock defeated at Battle of Monongahela (near Pittsburgh)

#### **1756**

May 18 England declares war on France

June 9 France declares war on England

August 14 English surrender Fort Oswego (New York near Lake Ontario) to General Montcalm

#### **1757**

August 9 English surrender Fort William Henry to Lieutenant General Louis-Joseph Montcalm

#### **1758**

July 8 Battle of Fort Ticonderoga

July 27 French surrender Louisbourg to General Jeffrey Amherst

October 26 Treaty of Easton

November 24 French abandon Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh)

#### **1759**

July 25 French surrender Fort Niagara

September 13 Battle on the Plains of Abraham at Québec

September 17 French surrender Québec

October 4 Rogers' Rangers attack Indian village at Saint Francis in Québec

#### **1760**

September 8 French surrender Canada

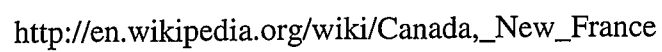
#### **1763**

February 10 Treaty of Paris

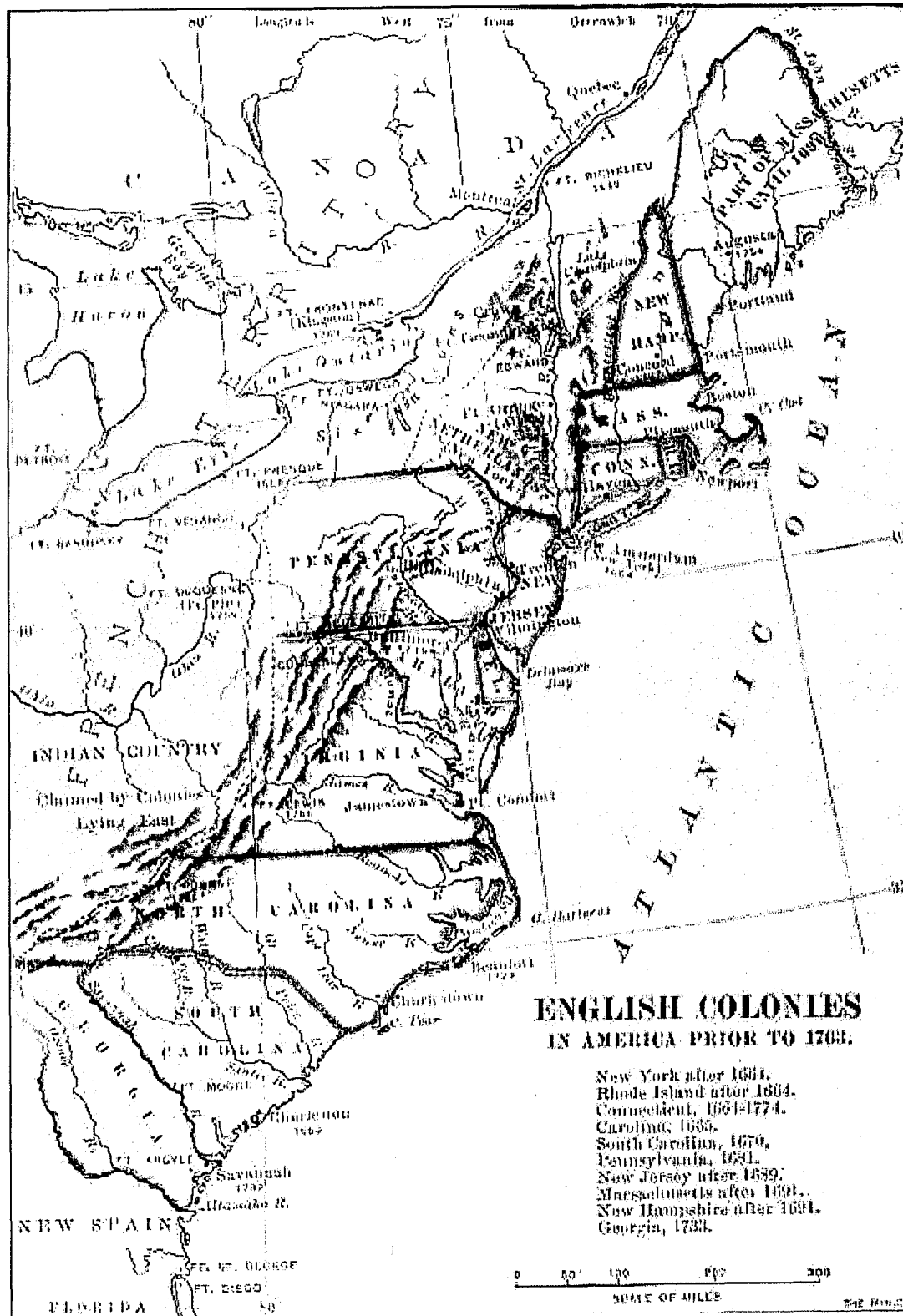
October 7 Royal Proclamation of 1763 (A Proclamation by King George III that regulated native land and colonial trade with Amerindians.)

From Walter Borneman, The French and Indian War: Deciding the Fate of North America (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2006), xiii.

*Pays d'en Haut*

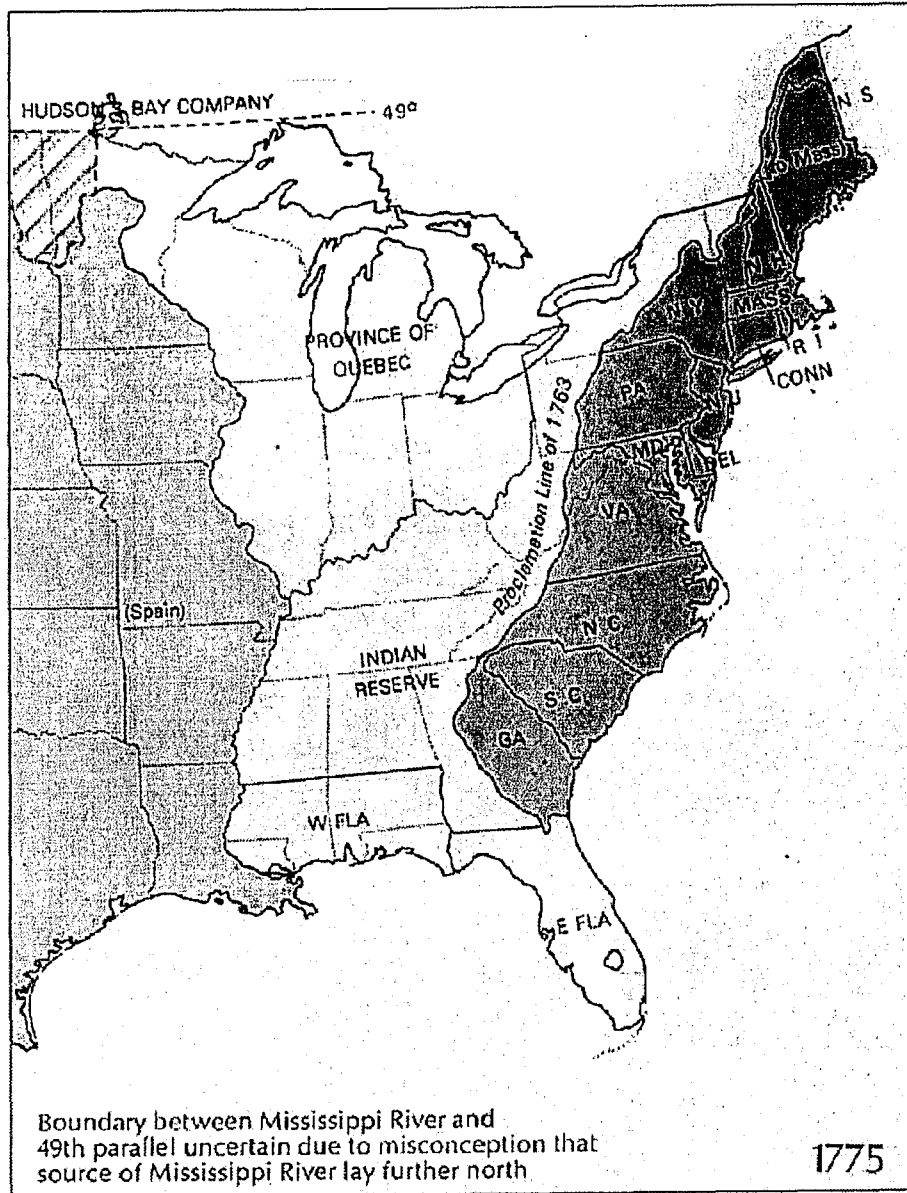


## English Colonies Prior to 1763



[http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/maps/english\\_colonies/](http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/maps/english_colonies/)

## Proclamation Line of 1763



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\\_Proclamation\\_of\\_1763](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Proclamation_of_1763)

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